

Remarks

Favorable reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the above amendments and in light of the following remarks and discussion.

Claims 1-20 are currently pending in the application; Claims 1-4 and 7-9 are amended, and new Claims 11-20 are added.

In the Office Action the drawings are objected to; Claims 8-10 are objected to because of an informality; Claims 1 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,115,275 to Suzuki; and Claims 2, 3, and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki.

Initially, the indication of allowable subject matter in Claims 4-7 and 9 is gratefully acknowledged. In response, Claims 4, 7, and 9 are rewritten in independent form. Claims 5 and 6 depend from independent Claim 4. Thus, in accordance with the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter, the allowance of Claims 4-7 and 9 is requested.

As stated above the drawings are objected to under 37 C.F.R. § 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include reference sign 16 mentioned in the description. In response, as shown in the attached replacement sheet, Figure 1 has been amended to include reference sign 16.

The drawings are also objected to because they include reference characters A and B not mentioned in the description. In response, the specification has been amended to mention reference characters A and B. For these reasons, it is requested that the objection to the drawings be withdrawn.

As stated above Claims 8-10 are objected to because of an informality. In response, Claims 8 and 9 have been amended to recite "A toner refill kit" in place of the previous recitation of "The toner refill kit," to correct the informality. For these reasons, it is requested that the objection to Claims 8-10 be withdrawn.

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Amendments to the Drawings

The attached sheet of drawings includes changes to Fig. 1. This sheet, which includes Fig. 1 and 2, replaces the original sheet including Fig. 1 and 2.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet (1)

As stated above Claims 1 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Suzuki. Claims 2, 3, and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki. It is requested that the rejections of the claims be withdrawn for the following reasons.

The present invention is directed to key for unlocking a toner hopper of an image forming apparatus (e.g., as recited in independent Claim 1), and a toner refill kit for refilling a locking hopper of an image forming apparatus (e.g., as recited in independent Claim 8). Independent Claim 1 recites at least one first projection attached to a first member. The first projection is configured to unlock a first locking-type toner hopper of an image forming apparatus. At least one second projection is attached to the first member, the second projection configured to unlock a second locking-type toner hopper. Independent Claim 8 recites that the kit includes the combination of a key and a first container containing toner. The key has at least one projection configured to be received by and unlock a lock of a toner hopper of an image forming apparatus.

Regarding the rejection of Claim 1, Suzuki is directed to a developing unit for an image forming apparatus. As shown in Figures 5 and 6, for example, of Suzuki, a developer unit 1-2 includes a cover 1-3 and a locking member 1-21. When a lug 1-21c of the locking member 1-21 is not mated with a hole 1-3a of the cover 3a, the cover 1-3 can be opened. Conversely, when the lug 1-21c is mated with the hole 1-3a, the cover 1-3 cannot be opened.

Suzuki does not disclose or render obvious, however, the claimed features of a first projection configured to unlock a first locking-type toner hopper and a second projection configured to unlock a second locking-type toner hopper, as recited in independent Claim 1. For these reasons, it is requested that the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) be withdrawn, and the allowance of independent Claim 1 is requested.

Regarding the rejection of independent Claim 8, Suzuki does not disclose or render obvious the claimed features of a key having at least one projection configured to be received by and unlock a lock of a toner hopper of an image forming apparatus, as recited in the independent claim. Rather, as discussed above, Suzuki shows that when the lug 1-21c of the locking member 1-21 is removed from the hole 1-3a of the cover 1-3, rather than when the lug 1-21c is received by the hole 1-3a, the cover 1-3 can be opened. For these reasons, it is requested that the rejection of Claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) be withdrawn, and the allowance of independent Claim 8 is requested.

Claims 2, 3, 10, and 18-20 are allowable for the same reasons as independent Claims 1 and 8 from which they depend, as well as for their own features. Thus, it is requested that the rejections of dependent Claims 2, 3, and 10 under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) and 103(a) be withdrawn, and the allowance of dependent Claims 2, 3, 10, and 18-20 is requested.

It is further asserted that Claims 11-17 are allowable for reasons similar to those of independent Claim 1. The allowance of Claims 11-17 is therefore also requested.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal Allowance. A Notice of Allowance for Claims 1-20 is earnestly solicited.

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Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

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Respectfully submitted,

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